

# PLAIN TALKS

FEBRUARY-MARCH  
1981





# MAIL BOX

## THE COVER

The cover shot is a view from inside the still-incomplete active coal storage area at the Nelson 6 coal site.

An enclosed storage area, the 100- by 400-foot structure features a gabled roof. It will be capable of holding about a two-day coal supply, which will cascade down the sides through gates. A rotary plow traveling along wings located beneath the coal will move it onto a conveyor and transport it to another transfer station.

More information about Nelson 6 can be found in a special update featured on pages six and seven of this issue of the magazine.

The cover photograph was shot by Susan Gilley, *Plain Talks* editor, in mid-February.

Don Crawford  
Gulf States Utilities Co.  
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Mr. Crawford:

Ollie and I have been very remiss in not thanking you sooner for the wonderful day the retirees and their guests had on October 30.

The tour of the nuclear plant was very informative, the lunch in the park delicious, the bus ride very comfortable and the association with other retirees wonderful. As usual with Gulf States functions, every activity was well-planned and we want you to know we appreciated it.

Ollie has always been proud to have been an employee of Gulf States.

Sincerely yours,  
Nola Schultz  
Orange, Texas

Dear Gulf States,

I am in the fourth grade. My name is Allyson Sanders. My school is Ridgewood Elementary in Port Neches. I just got your "Y-Hum comes to Southgulf"

book and I read it and it was very good. I like to read a lot but I usually don't like Gulf books and stuff, but I like this one.

I thank you for the book.

Love,

Allyson Sanders  
Port Neches, Texas

**Editor's Note: The youngster was referring to the company's third annual report for young people, written by Rick Harvin of the Public Affairs Department.**

James A. Stelly  
Gulf States Utilities Co.  
Orange, Texas  
Dear Mr. Stelly:

As usual today when I called your plant I got the wrong department. As I explained my dilemma, he chuckled and directed me to the right department. That is what has prompted me to finally write this letter.

Over the past few months, I have dealt with Gulf States in many areas, including my new home. It has been a very pleasant experience. They always seem to understand what I want even when I don't and get me to the right department and get me taken care of.

Of course, I can't say enough nice things about the way Ed Matsoukas has handled our inspections promptly and efficiently. From our first experience with him and Gene Koci, we have felt very confident in their guidance.

We just wanted to let you know that we appreciate your people and hope you will tell them so. Cordially,

Linda Adney  
Orange, Texas

**Editor's Note: Matsoukas is a consumer service advisor in Orange. Koci is now a supervisor-customer accounting in Beaumont who previously was supervisor of home energy audits for the Beaumont Division.**

## PLAIN TALKS

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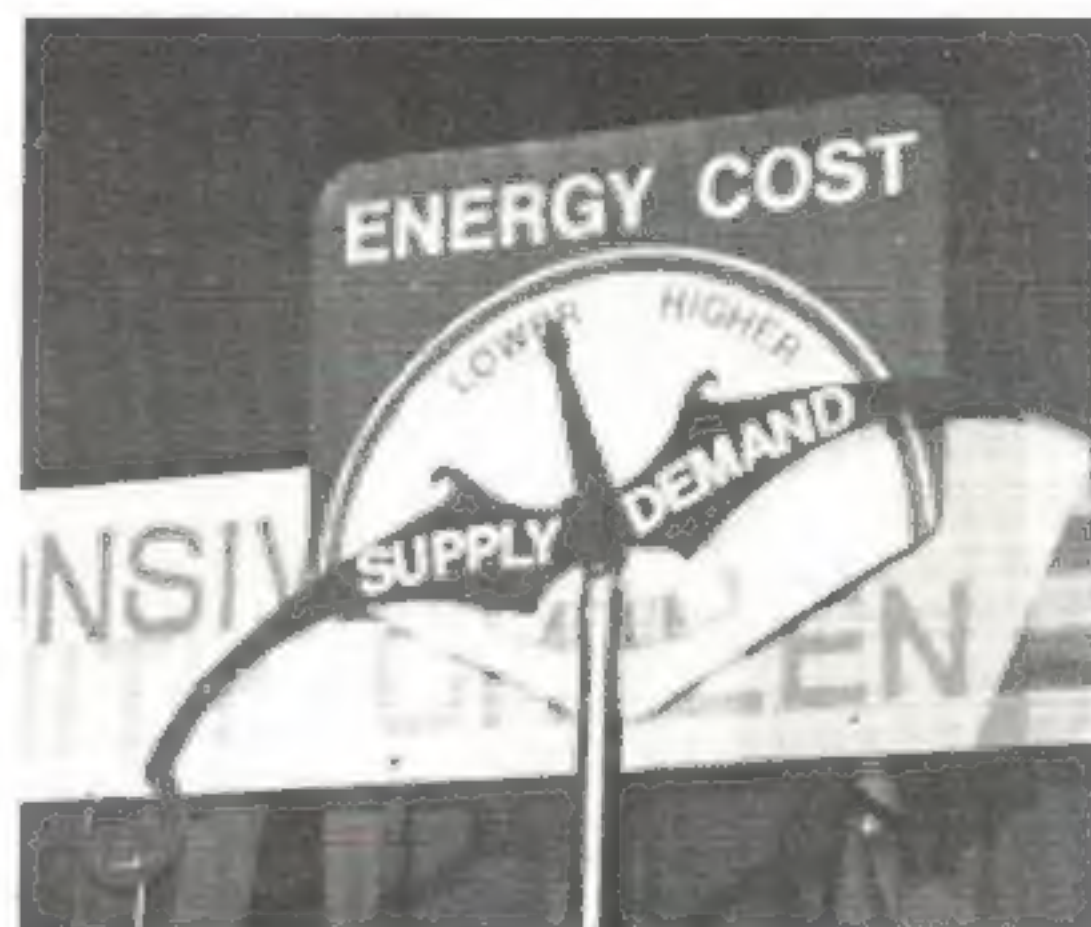
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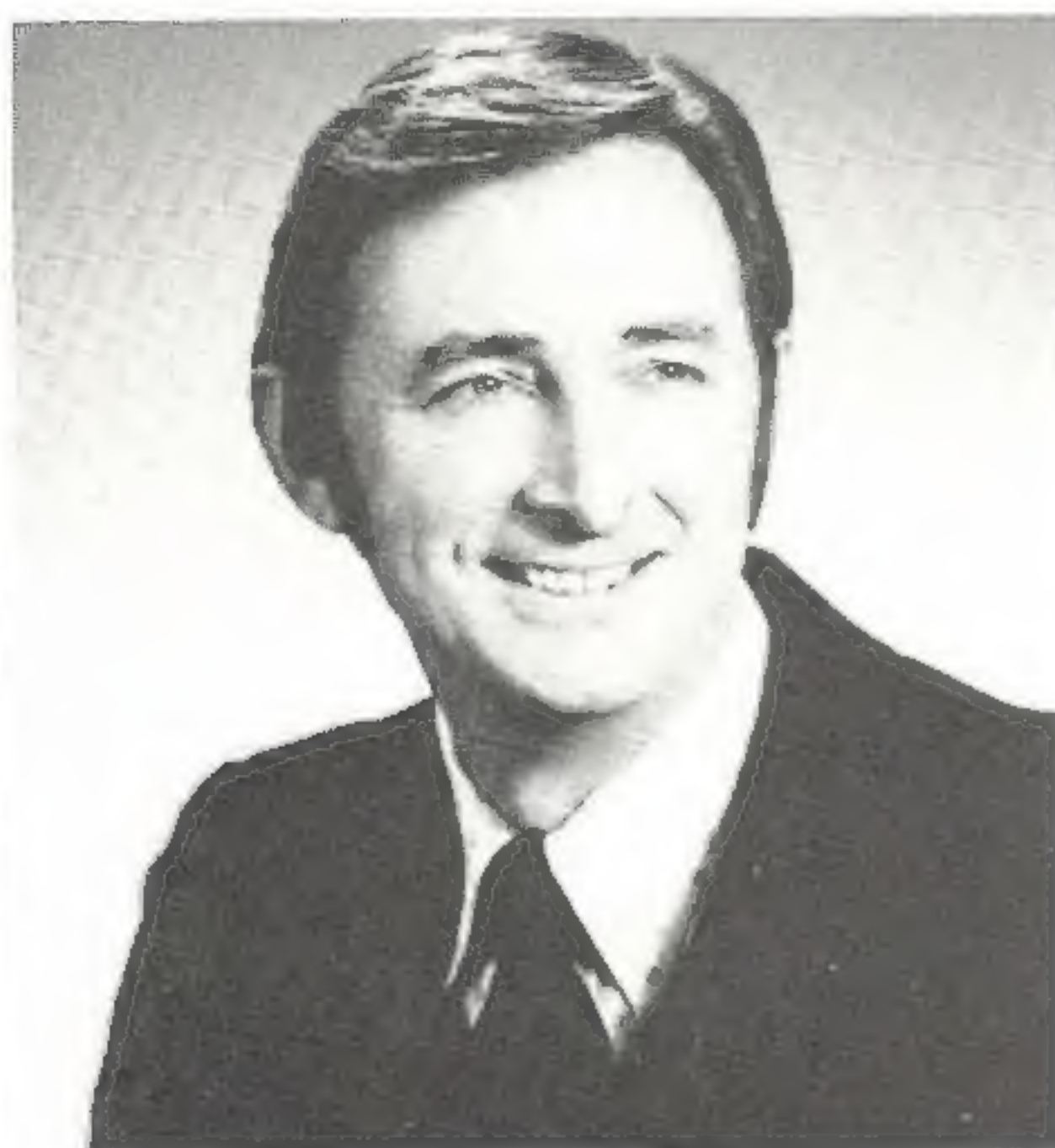
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## Promotions given to Moss, Hebert

A new vice president of financial services and a division vice president for Baton Rouge Division were elected by the board of directors in early February.

The promotions were approved during a regular board meeting in Beaumont Feb. 5 and became effective March 1.



Calvin J. Hebert, division vice president of the Baton Rouge Division for the past two years, was transferred to Beaumont to become vice president of financial services.



James E. Moss, manager of power supply, was named Baton Rouge Division vice president.

Hebert, 46, has been with Gulf States since 1962, when he joined the company as an engineer. He worked in various

engineering positions in Beaumont, Port Arthur and Conroe, before moving to Baton Rouge as operations supervisor in 1974. From 1976 until 1979, he worked as marketing superintendent and manager-electric operations and has been division vice president since 1979.

A native of Abbeville, Hebert holds an electrical engineering degree from the University of Southwestern Louisiana at Lafayette. He has also done graduate work in engineering and business administration at Lamar University in Beaumont.

Moss joined GSU in 1958 as an engineer in transmission and distribution and worked in several engineering positions in Baton Rouge before being named general maintenance supervisor at Louisiana Station. He served as superintendent of Sabine Station from 1974 until being named manager of power supply in 1979.

Moss is a registered professional engineer in both Louisiana and Texas, and a 1958 graduate of Louisiana State University with a degree in electrical engineering. He participated in the University of Michigan's Public Utility Executive Program and the Engineering Management Program at LSU.

## President's Awards honor safety

Company President Norman Lee announced in late January that Port Arthur Division and Neches Station employees had earned President's Awards for their 1980 safety records. In making the announcement, Lee commended the employees and Ted Meinscher, Port Arthur Division vice president, and Jimmie Smith, Neches Station superintendent.

Mike Durham, manager of occupational health and safety, said that in 1980 the Port Arthur Division had the best overall

safety rating of any division in the last four years. "I am extremely proud of the records these two operating units have attained. They were instrumental in helping us to achieve our company safety goals in 1980," Durham said.

Port Arthur Division employees and their spouses were honored with a dinner dance at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 20 in Knights of Columbus Hall in Groves. A banquet was hosted for the Neches Station group on Jan. 29 at Moncla's in Beaumont.



*Jimmie Smith accepts Neches award from President Lee.*



*Ted Meinscher accepts Port Arthur Division award from President Lee.*

## Teen proposes winning idea

Greg Dyess' love of experimentation and active curiosity has begun to pay off for him.

The Vidor High School senior was one of 25 semi-finalists nationwide in the recent Thomas Edison/Max McGraw Scholarship Program coordinated locally



by Gulf States. Entries were in the form of an abstract of a proposal, idea or experimental procedure dealing with a practical application in the fields of science and engineering.

His proposal: "The Construction of an LED Grid to Replace the CRT in an Ordinary Television."

According to Dyess, in a layman's terms, that means "taking a television picture tube and transforming it into a solid state" television.

From March 26-28, Dyess will enter his first model of his proposal in the Houston Science Fair. As a direct result of his LED project, he was able to participate in the Texas Junior Science, Engineering and Humanities Symposium in Austin Feb. 11-13.



*Vidor High School senior Greg Dyess explains his entry in the recent Thomas Edison/Max McGraw Scholarship Program, a proposal for constructing an LED grid to replace the CRT in an ordinary television. Looking on is his science teacher, Jeanann McCleskey.*

While Dyess did not receive a scholarship from the Edison/McGraw competition, he has received another scholarship to the University of Texas, where he will major in electrical engineering. That award was based on his SAT scores. Dyess said he hopes to supplement that aid

with another scholarship or a student job.

The youth, who turned 18 after conceiving the idea, reports that he has always been curious about electricity and electronics.

"When I was a little kid," he recalls, "I had this little night light and I'd go around plugging it into different outlets. Then, when I was older, instead of playing with electric trains, I'd wire them up."

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Gene Dyess, the teenager says he probably inherited his aptitude from his mother, a teacher at Vidor High School who earned a degree in mathematics and minored in computer science.

Dyess says both his parents and his science teacher, Jeanann McCleskey, "gave me good encouragement" in the project.

After graduation from college, Dyess reveals plans to go into research.

## Issue to feature GSU graduates

High school and college graduates whose parents or grandparents are GSU employees or retirees, as well as GSUers themselves and their spouses who complete a college degree, will be featured in a special picture section of the June issue of *Plain Talks*.

Pictures — preferably black and white, head-to-shoulder shots — should be submitted no later than Thursday, April 30. Color photographs may be submitted if no others are available. Each picture should be labeled with the graduate's name, school and relationship to a GSU employee. Pictures will be returned after publication upon the request of the sender.

Pictures of graduates should be sent to Susan Gilley, *Plain Talks* editor, at the Goodhue Building in Beaumont.

## Company signs study agreement

Officials of Gulf States and Combustion Engineering signed an agreement Jan. 19 for a \$5 million feasibility study which could lead to construction of a \$150 million coal gasification plant. The plant would use improved methods of turning high-sulfur coal into clean synthetic gas.

Phase I of the coal gasification project, which involved the 20-month, \$5 million feasibility study, is being funded by the Department of Energy (DOE). DOE and Combustion Engineering signed their contract last September. If the study shows promise, a go-ahead for final design and construction would be made in the fall of 1982.

If built, the plant would be adjacent to Nelson No. 3 and would provide low-BTU gas that would be burned in the unit's 150-megawatt boiler.



*Board Chairman Don Crawford (seated at right) and Donald E. Lyons, vice president of the fossil power systems division of Combustion Engineering (seated at left) signed the agreement.*



## Westlake coal unit will be a first for Gulf States.

# Nelson 6

**B**ig and bustling.

Those two words aptly describe the 500-acre site of Nelson 6, the company's first coal-fired generating unit, where about 2,000 construction workers are helping build the power plant and adjoining coal-handling facility.

The project is also big in terms of dollars, with company officials estimating the construction of Nelson 6 will cost about \$502 million upon completion.

But in a little more than a year, company officials believe the additional unit located near Westlake, La. will have settled into the routine of producing 540 megawatts of electricity. It will be manned by an operating crew of about 190, many of whom will work in the coal-handling area. (Sam Rayburn G&T now owns 10 percent of the unit and there is a possibility that there will be additional ownership participation.)

Already towering above the scene is a 500-foot-tall chimney designed to house two independent brick flues — one for Nelson 6 and another for Nelson 5, another 540 megawatt coal unit tentatively scheduled to go into operation by April, 1987.

The story of GSU's first use of coal to generate electricity hardly begins there, however. Instead, it begins 1,579 miles away at Jacob's Ranch outside Gillette, Wyo. Gulf States has a 20-year contract with Kerr-McGee to purchase 50

million tons of the Western coal at that site.

The company also has a contract with Bethlehem Steel Corporation of Johnstown, Pa. for construction of 605 rotary-dump railroad cars. The patented-design cars, called Coalporters, will make up five 110-car unit trains, with spares to be used when other cars are out for repairs or routine maintenance.

According to Jerry Steger, GSU's subcontractor coordinator at the site, coal delivery will actually begin this October, when it will be used to test the coal-handling equipment, then stockpiled in the 25-acre inactive storage area.

One of Steger's duties is to conduct tours of the construction site for civic groups and other visitors.

During a typical tour, Steger says that he explains, "Kansas City-Southern will move the unit trains in an 11-day cycle from the mine to the site and back to the mine."

Once a train arrives, it will be moved to a special rotary dumper where the cars will be rotated at a 140- to 180-degree turn to spill out the coal. One Coalporter, he notes, can be unloaded in two minutes, and the entire 110-car unit train takes only four hours to unload. As the coal is dumped from the car, it will fall into an 88-foot-deep pit — or hopper — that can hold 200 tons.

"Once Unit 6 is on line," Steger continues, "we will unload one unit

train every other day. If Unit 5 were to be on line, too, we would require one unit train every day."

From the hopper, vibrating feeders will place the coal on an enclosed conveyor belt. The belt will move the coal over scales for weighing and on to transfer station one.

Altogether, coal at Nelson 6 will travel over 3,976 linear feet — two-thirds of a mile — of enclosed conveyor. The conveyors will contain 9,150 linear feet of conveyor belt.

The coal will then be divided for storage in either the active storage building or on the 25-acre inactive, outdoor area, which will hold up to a 60-day supply.

Steger notes that the inactive coal supply "will be compacted and watered to inhibit combustibility and to maintain dust control."

Meanwhile, in the enclosed active storage area, a 100- by 400-foot structure with a gabled roof and capable of holding about a two-day supply, the coal will cascade down the sides through gates, where a rotary plow traveling along wings located beneath the coal will move it onto a conveyor and transport it to transfer station two.

According to Steger, up until its arrival at transfer station two, the coal will have been what is known as "plus two-inch material," or about the size of an adult's fist. At transfer station two, a crusher



# Takes Shape

by Susan Gilley  
Plain Talks Editor

will reduce it to "plus one-inch material" before it travels along an elevated enclosed conveyor to a tripper deck in the 275-foot-tall boiler building.

The tripper deck will automatically keep the six large silos filled with a collective six-hour supply of coal. From each silo, the coal will be dropped into a pulverizer and reduced to the consistency of face powder. Steger says it will then be blown into the boiler with hot air to reduce the moisture content and increase combustibility.

Steger says site visitors fre-

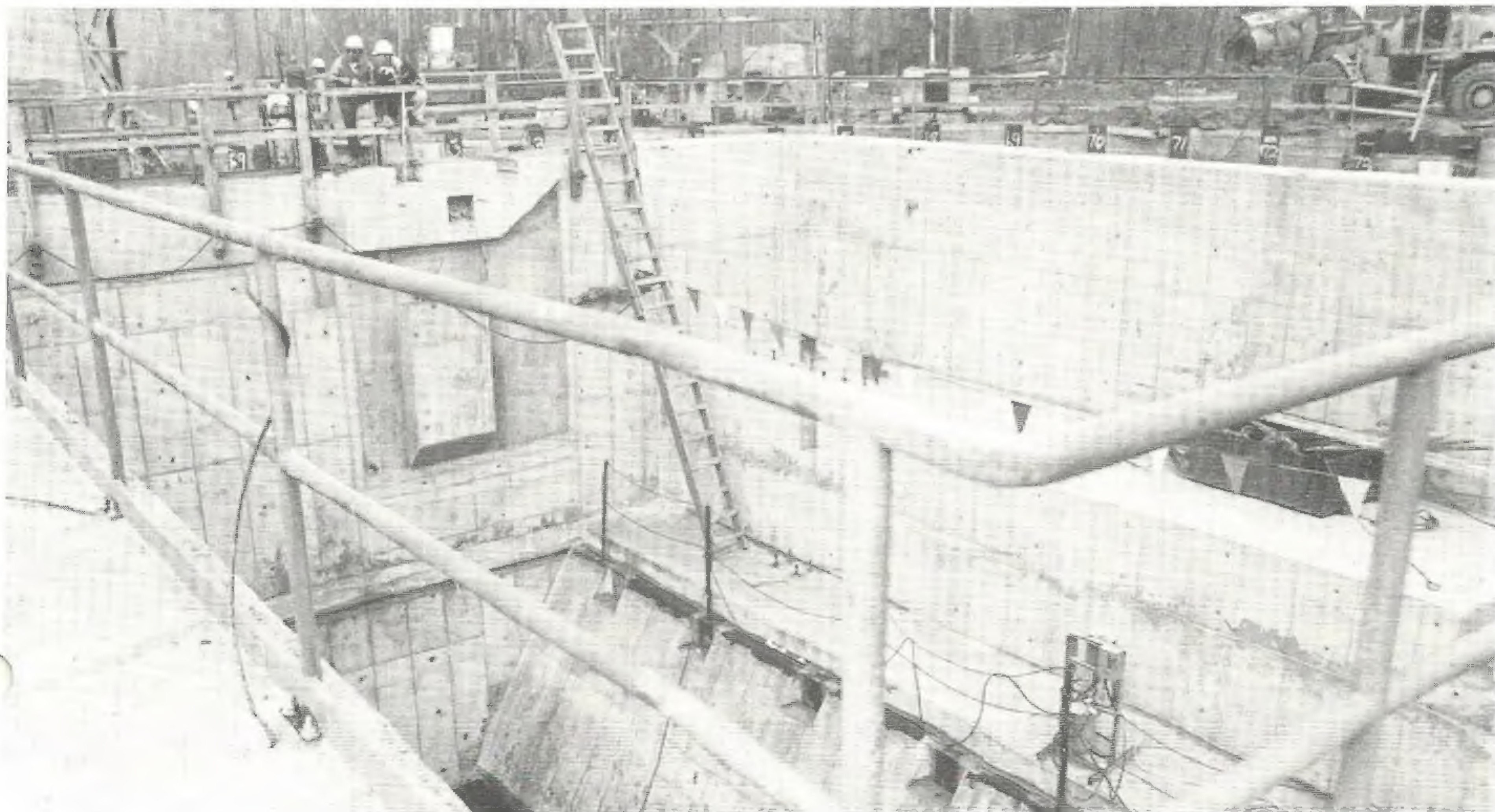
quently express concern about environmental considerations, but points out that he is able to reassure them, "Gulf States is meeting or exceeding all environmental considerations. We'll be burning 8,000 tons of coal per day per unit at peak load and we expect to produce only slightly more than 6 percent byproducts — or, about 500 tons per day of fly and bottom ash."

Fly ash, he explains, is made up of the airborne particles which will be electrically charged and collected on plates in a precipitator. Bottom ash will be collected

at the bottom of a boiler. Both fly and bottom ash will be moved to specially-designed ash disposal areas.

Puzzled visitors also sometimes ask Steger why Nelson 6 construction preceded that of Nelson 5.

With a grin, Steger tells them that the numbering for units at Nelson Station runs from east to west, with Nelson units 1-4 making up the existing power plant. However, the coal-handling facility is operated from west to east, making it more practical to build on the Nelson 6 site first.



*Coalporters held by a rotary dumper will spill out their coal into this pit.*





*Adams shows off his family's new home, which is a model of energy-efficiency.*

# Practicing Conservation

**J**ohn Adams doesn't just preach conservation as New Caney's district service representative — he began practicing it, too, as his family's new home began construction.

The burly, six-foot, two-inch Adams, who once played half-back for Louisiana Tech University and was a teammate of Terry Bradshaw, says his new Conroe home should be ready for occupancy by the end of March.

Adams says he realizes that "infiltration is your worst enemy in a home," but he says he hopes to counteract that foe with a variety of energy-saving measures, most of which were already in place by the middle of February.

He also points out that he kept his home small — 1,330 square feet — for his family of four (soon to be five, since wife Kerry is expecting another baby) because "I expect energy costs to double."

Located at the end of a cul-de-sac, the Adams' home is near a

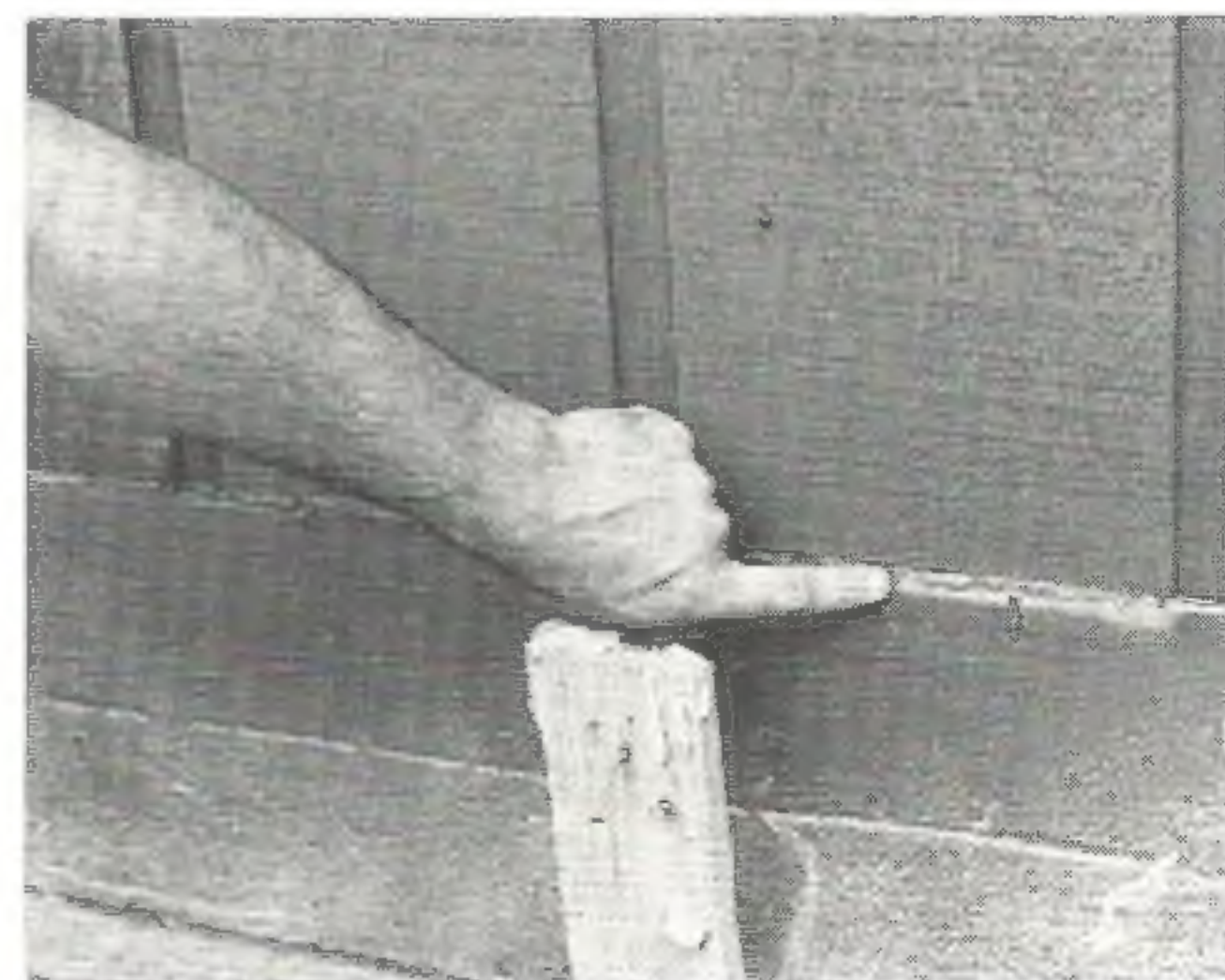
creek and a horse pasture — an ideal playground for son Steven, 10, and daughter Joy, 8.

But Adams says the new home has even more important features going for it. Some of the items that helped the brick structure score 98 out of a possible 122 points in a National Energy Watch (NEW) audit are:

- Purchase of a heat exchanger that will provide the family with free hot water for their 52-gallon hot water heater.
- Installation of a continuous ridge vent and soffit vents under the eaves for "natural ventilation."
- Caulking of the sole (base) plate, the original two-by-four that goes atop the slab of a house.
- Insulating all the T-joints, then caulking up the sides and duct taping them.
- Putting 12½ to 13 inches of rock-wool insulation in the ceiling. Adams says most new homes have five to six inches of insulation.
- Caulking the sheathing of the home as it was put in place.

- Installing a ceiling fan that will reverse to blow hot air down.
- Caulking all holes in the upper plate of the home where electricians and plumbers had run pipes and wires and caulking around all outlet plates and light switches.
- Purchasing the most efficient two-ton heat pump that he could find.

The Adams' model energy-efficiency home features three bedrooms, a living room, kitchen, one bath and a garage, which he says he may someday transform into an additional bedroom and bath.



*Adams points out some of the caulking he performed as construction was underway.*



# Kirkland heads new program

by Ilene Harral



Behind a big desk piled high with documents and official-looking books, Kay Kirkland sits smiling calmly. As she rocks slightly in her chair, relaxed and self-confident, papers and pamphlets surround her at every turn.

The paperwork is a good clue to the fact that in her new job, she'll be dealing with federal agencies. Kay's assignment is to make sure that small businesses, some perhaps at a disadvantage, are given an equal chance to compete for Gulf States' trade through the Purchasing Department.

With a long title to back her up (purchasing agent, small and minority businesses), Kay will be forging a new role for the company. She will seek out small, minority- and women-owned businesses that can offer goods and services to GSU.

"Actually, the company has had a loosely formed minority trade program since January 1978. But

until now, we were not actively looking for minority- and women-owned businesses," Kay explains. Her job was created recently to develop a formal plan and to head up GSU's "Outreach" program that will actively solicit minority business.

Kay was employed by GSU in 1970 after she earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Lamar University. In 1974, when she left credit and collection, Kay was the first woman at Gulf States to become a purchasing agent.

She says there were some "surprising reactions" at that time. But, other than a few good jokes that arose from the situation, Kay doesn't seem to place any great significance on setting that precedent.

She doesn't believe that being a woman will make her more effective in her new job. "I don't think that matters at all," she says concisely. But she is con-

cerned about getting enough names of minorities and women who own businesses to make the program work.

"I'm going to need the help of all Gulf States employees to get this program off the ground. Any employee who knows about a possible minority business can send a note to me (11th floor, Goodhue Building) with the company's name and address. I'll contact the company to see whether the business falls within the guidelines of our program.

"We'll continue to follow our policy of buying in our service area as much as possible," Kay says. "And our prime goal still will be to make the best buy possible for Gulf States."





Richard Rawlins, North Texas State University



Three Lake Charles Division employees dress in Western clothes for the conference.

Chairman's annual management conference held in Beaumont; divisions hold similar sessions.

## GSU—a responsive

"In today's tempestuous times it takes far more than civic club involvement and support for worthwhile charities" to be considered a responsive citizen.

That remark was made by Board Chairman Don Crawford during his keynote address during the January 28 Chairman's Annual Management Conference.

Crawford, who was referring to the conference theme of "GSU: A Responsive Community Citizen," continued, "Public understanding is critical if the company is to maintain the financial stability necessary to provide reliable service at reasonable rates."

In addition to Crawford, the one-day conference featured presentations by Joseph Donnelly, executive vice president-finance, and Bill Jefferson, vice president-rates and regulatory affairs. Speakers from outside the company included Gene Meyer of Kidder Peabody, who provided an overview of the utility industry's financial situation; Dr. George Wall, a Lamar University professor and member of GSU's

Beaumont Consumer Advisory Panel; Jackie Lassiter, owner of Jacqueline Lassiter Associates, who discussed working with consumer groups; and Fred Webber, executive vice president-legislative affairs for the Edison Electric Institute, who discussed "The New Congress — Legislation that Affects GSU and Your Customers."

In a review of 1980, Crawford told the gathering, "Continuing inflation and almost unbearable interest rates have caused Gulf States and many other capital-intensive companies to take new approaches to budgeting." At GSU, he explained, "Instead of establishing the amount to be spent in 1981 and letting that dictate the level of earnings which will result, we are reversing the process in order to assure that our financial strength remains intact."

Since the company has selected \$2.05 as an acceptable earnings figure — the same as the 1980 level — the 1981 budget is necessarily being tailored, meaning some programs originally planned for



Fred Webber discusses the new political scene in Washington.





*Jim Aldridge (far right) paused to chat with participating speakers (from left) Dr. George Wall, Jackie Lassiter and Dr. Gene McCann*



*Lake Charles Division*

## community citizen

1981 may have to wait.

The 1981 construction budget, he pointed out, will provide a brief respite from the heavy River Bend financing load that GSU had been carrying alone. Partners in River Bend 1 will be footing the construction bills throughout 1981 as they assume their 37 percent interest in the unit.

Nevertheless, Crawford noted, the 1981 construction budget will be \$360 million — less than the \$645 million spent in 1980, but still a lot to finance when interest rates hover in the 20 percent range. "The '81 construction budget will require \$225 million worth of external financing and another \$160 million in securities probably will be issued to pay off a revolving credit agreement which the company had to make use of during 1980 to overcome the shortfall from delaying participation in our construction programs," he said.

Crawford suggested that one way the company might ease the impact of current economic hardships would be to "broaden its financial base."

According to Crawford, "A deeper involvement in unregulated businesses should provide better earnings, broader investor acceptance and higher stock prices, all of which will make it easier to finance our utility operations."

In closing, Crawford commended Gulf States' "4,200 dedicated and hard-working employees" who he said have proven themselves "capable of dealing with the important and ever-changing issues confronting our industry."

During February, similar sessions were held for management employees in all divisions and in various system departments.



*Ken Huskey of K. W. Huskey Associates spoke on the subject "Employees are Customers, Too."*



# Conservation Program Aims

Those stricken with wanderlust are no longer the sole owners of mobile homes.

As it has become more sophisticated and more attractive, manufactured housing has become the keystone of alternative housing for middle-class Americans. Indeed, system-wide, Gulf States has been logging more new mobile home connections than conventional housing connections for the past couple of years. For the year 1980, 57 percent of all new residential connections was for mobile homes.

Beaumont and Lake Charles divisions have the greatest number of mobile home connections — last December, for example, the Beaumont Division had 151 and the Lake Charles Division had 183 — while Port Arthur lags far behind because of its lack of available land for mobile home siting.

But as more and more families turn to manufactured housing, notes Brooks Bishop, coordinator-energy information, Gulf States

must become more and more concerned about their energy efficiency.

In an effort to increase energy efficiency, the company last year developed a brand-new National Energy Watch (N.E.W.) audit and certification program specifically for manufactured housing. Its aim, says Bishop, is to encourage customers to purchase homes that are already energy efficient similar to site-built homes.

At its inception last fall, Gulf States was believed to be the only utility in the nation with a certification program for mobile homes. Last Nov. 4, Stephen Dawson, owner of Big D Mobile Homes near Conroe, became the first dealer enrolled in the N.E.W. program.

Bishop explains, "First of all, for the program to be successful, the dealer has to want to be a part of the N.E.W. program. We want to enroll them by their commitment to sell the more energy-efficient models."

Luckily, says Bishop, the GSU task force charged with devising that mobile home program met with "excellent cooperation from the Louisiana and Texas chapters of the Manufactured Housing Association."

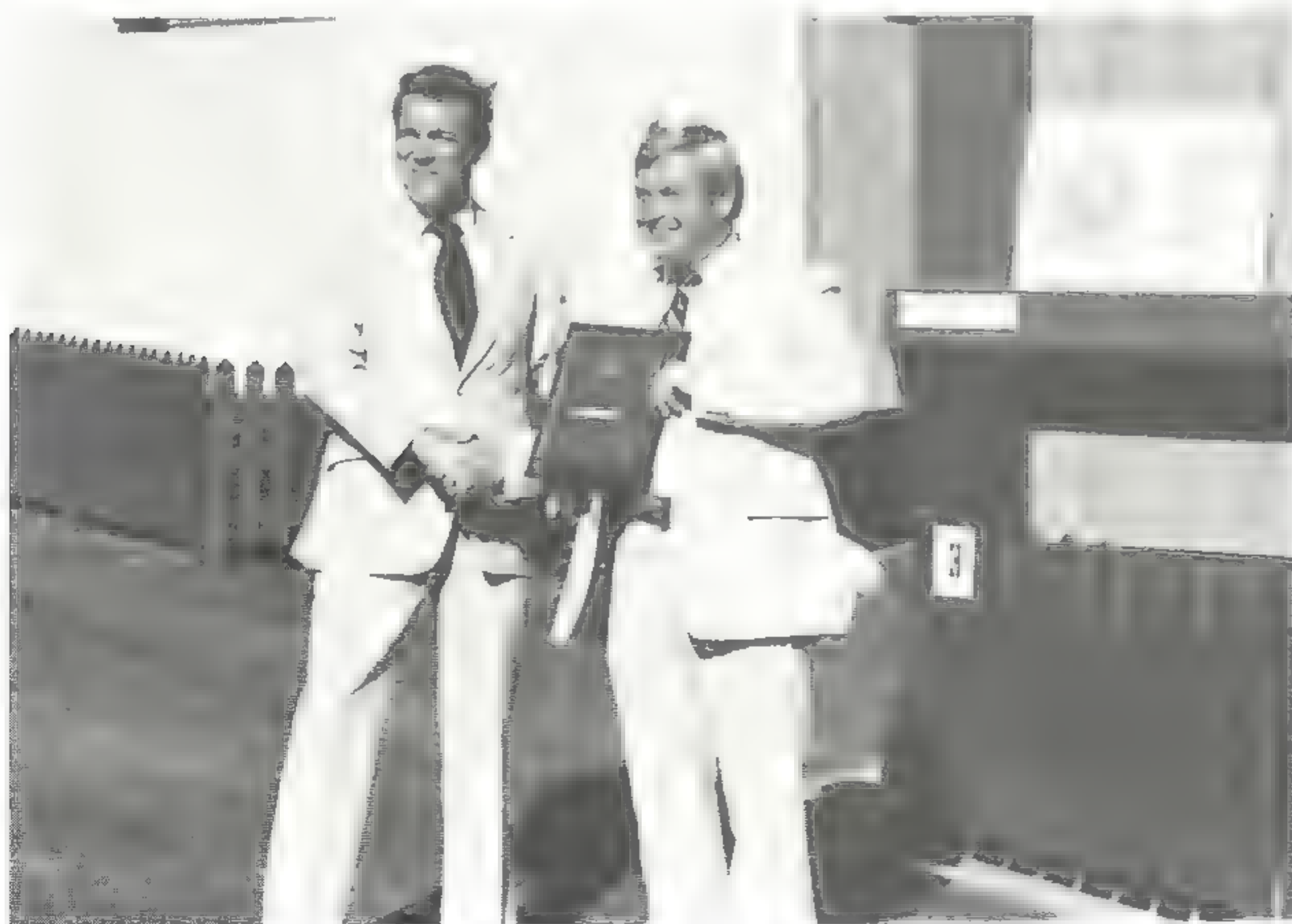
According to Bishop, mobile homes fall into two general categories, those built before 1976 and those built after 1976 when tougher construction standards went into effect. Although existing homes can be retrofitted, Bishop warns that the undertaking can be both time-consuming and costly.

"Let's say that a customer goes in to look at a mobile home," Bishop says. "The best-selling models usually contain about 910 square feet. That may not sound like much area to have to heat and cool, but you have to remember that the same home would have about 1,145 square feet of wall area exposed to the elements."

Bishop continues. "We will provide the dealers with information showing how a home can be upgraded to save in energy costs and to actually achieve payback within a very few years. Then the customer will be encouraged to ask for features to be installed in the home at the factory before delivery to their home site."

Bishop has charts that show how a \$1,200 investment in energy-saving equipment, tacked on to the cost of a 910-square-foot mobile home and financed for 10 years at 8 percent add-on interest, can actually save the customer money.

Although the additional mortgage and interest for the additional \$1,200 would total \$2,160 and would add \$18 to the monthly payment, Bishop predicts that the equipment would result in



*Western Division Vice President John Conley (left) congratulates Stephen Dawson upon his enrollment in the mobile home N.E.W. program.*



# at Mobile Home Residents

savings of \$257 the first year — compared to a cost of \$216 annually. The customer, he says, would end up saving \$41 the first year. This savings will go up as the price of energy increases.

Bishop has a checklist, reproduced elsewhere on this page, showing recommended items at 1980 prices that will boost energy savings.

Mobile homeowners can take one measure that won't cost an extra dime but will result in substantial energy savings, Bishop suggests.

"We foresee one of the biggest problems as being orientation of the home on the property," he explains. "The long sides should face north and south."

GSU could benefit just as much as the mobile homeowner who

takes extra steps to conserve energy.

The kilowatt load for a new N.E.W.-certified mobile home is approximately two kilowatts less than one that is built to the minimum HUD thermal standards.

Based on 1980's mobile home sales, N.E.W. certification would amount to a load reduction of about 8,800 kilowatts. "This savings in load helps provide energy for growth, reduces our need for expensive foreign oil and at the same time helps the customer cope with their escalating energy bills," Bishop concludes.

## Energy-Saving Features

Added ceiling insulation	\$255
Double glass windows	410
Added wall insulation	150
Added floor insulation	150
Window awnings	210
Water heater wrap	25
	\$1200

Note: Those willing to invest even more should consider skirting, which eliminates air leakage, reduces air infiltration and protects the flexible ductwork beneath most mobile homes from curious cats and dogs.

## Meet your correspondent: Casey Richert of Jennings

There may not be many Gulf Staters in Jennings, but *Plain Talks* correspondent Casey Richert says there are still plenty of good stories to be found in the small Cajun-flavored community.

The problem is, sighs Mrs. Richert, that people just don't always think to tell her about news and feature items. She can be reached at extension 30.

Mrs. Richert, a 16 year veteran of Gulf States, may be a story in herself. The departmental clerk in the Line Department not only is a working wife and mother, she's

also a fix-it lady, seamstress and yardworker!

Until the birth of her children, 7-year-old Shona Leah and 18-month-old Travis Charles, she somehow found time to sew clothes for herself, her husband Charles and for people who would pay her to do their sewing for them. She still sews most of her family's clothes. She also sews curtains, periodically repaints the walls of her home and undertakes other home repair chores. Since she recently had some of the doors replaced on her kitchen cabinets,



she reports that she's currently trying to find the time to do the paintwork on the fixtures.

A member of Our Lady Help Christian Church, she used to teach catechism classes. Her husband is a welder for Zigler Shipyard.



# Modern 'Prospector' Turns Main Office into 'Goldmine'

Reproduction and supply employees located on the sixth floor of the Main Office aren't exactly panning for precious metals, but their location is nevertheless something of a "goldmine" for the company.

James Mahlmann, supervisor-reproduction and supply, explains, "Last fall we acquired an electrolytic silver recovery unit called an Automatic Prospector that enables us to reclaim over 90 percent of the silver from the chemicals used in the film developing process, particularly the fixer bath chemicals."

With plenty of used chemicals on hand from microfilm, engineering drawing film and typesetting paper, the department found that the equipment more than paid for itself the first time it was used. According to Mahlmann, the \$695 machine recovered \$748 worth of silver the first time it was used.

Mahlmann explains, "We

accumulate the chemical until we have about 10 to 15 containers, then we start the recovery process. It's really simple — you dump some in (five gallons at a time), let it run 1½ hours and drain." The agitator attracts the silver, which resembles a coarse black powder. Fifteen containers can be processed in about two days.

Another employee familiar with the process is Carolyn White, section head-microfilm services. She notes, "The silver we're able to recover is about 90 percent pure. As of mid-February, we had about 81 troy ounces ready to sell. We know that any precious metal dealer will buy it. When we first started the recovery program, silver was about \$40 to \$50 an ounce, but the price has fallen since then."

To give an idea of how much can be recovered through the use of an electrolytic recovery system, Mahlmann says, "If silver is selling for about \$35 an ounce,



*Mahlmann displays some of the recovered silver.*

we can reclaim over \$17 a gallon for silver-rich fixer bath, also known as 'hypo'."

Now the pair is looking at another source of silver.

"The negatives used for printing on offset have a high silver content, so we're saving all our obsolete negatives. They actually have more silver on them than the chemicals we're now processing in the Automatic Prospector," Mahlmann comments.

## Energy: 'A 10-point program'

In his capacity as chairman of the U.S. National Committee of the World Energy Conference, GSU board chairman W. Donham Crawford has given the Reagan Administration a 10-point program designed to "reverse years of ineffectiveness and move America along the road to energy security."

In sending the policy statement to Vice President George Bush and Energy Secretary James Edwards, Crawford called the U.S. National Committee's proposals "the most effectiveness steps that could be taken to solve the nation's energy problems."

If the nation chooses to tap the "vast economic resources" at its

disposal, the U.S. National Committee said, "we might reasonably expect in 10 years to double our use of coal, stabilize all production, significantly increase availability of gas from conventional and non-conventional sources, triple the contribution of nuclear power and obtain significant contributions from synthetic fuels and renewable energy sources."

One recommendation calls for "developing a coordinated set of national policies aimed at encouraging the use of American coal at home and abroad." The committee calls for an endorsement of coal slurry pipelines, coal development on federal

lands, selective use of gas in conjunction with coal to meet environmental regulations for coal-fired boilers, expediting construction of synthetic fuel plants, and providing tax and other financial incentives for converting non-coal boilers to coal.

The committee also seeks removal of "obstacles" to nuclear power development. Specifically, the statement proposes streamlining licensing procedures, enacting government programs for storage of spent fuel and low-level wastes and proceeding with nuclear fuel reprocessing and the breeder reactor.





## Harry Leicht retires from GSU

During Harry Leicht's recent retirement party, fellow employee Sy Krebs recited a poem he had written in honor of the departing supervisor of the relay and communications department.

Leicht's retirement ended a 41-year, seven-month career with Gulf States.

Mrs. Leicht is shown in the picture with her husband and Krebs.



## Brooks listed in guide

Bill Brooks, supervisor-community and institutional program, has been listed in the latest edition of the "Guide to Energy Specialists."

Published by the Center for International Environment Information in New York City, the guide is aimed at providing media access to specialists in various environmental, energy and health fields.

Brooks, who is with the Consumer Services Department in Beaumont, has been identified as a specialist on the topic "energy conservation and renewable energy."

According to Richard L. Penberthy, managing editor of the guide, the publication provides the reporter/editor with direct access "to diverse and authoritative information sources."

The guide has received funding from the National Science Foundation and several foundations, corporations and environmental organizations.



## Trucks crunched in crane fall

The boom of a crane being used in the construction of GSU's new Edison Plaza office building fell the morning of January 20, smashing two pickup trucks, part of a wire fence and a power line.

No one was hurt in the incident.

Although two feeders were knocked out, no GSU customers were affected as the service was only for the jobsite.

## Energy program given at school

Youngsters enrolled in the Huguen Center for Crippled Children and Adults viewed an "Energy Today and Tomorrow" presentation by a young North Texas State University professor on Jan. 28.

Richard Rawlins told the energy story to students at the Port Arthur school, using props and visual aids.

He also gave his program to other Golden Triangle area schools and during the chairman's third annual management conference in Beaumont that day.



## Thomasee reports successful hunt

Bill Thomasee, Lafayette T&D employee, reports that he had a successful hunt at the Whiskey Bay Hunting Club in Butte La Rose, La. recently.

The GSUer bagged a 212-pound, six-point buck and a 148-pound, three-point buck.



## Scott Lee McCloy, class of 2002

Scott Lee McCloy, grandson of Leo Adams, stores foreman in Conroe, sports a new Aggie outfit.

Adams said Scott, who is just a few months old, will be in the class of 2002 at Texas A&M.





## Co-workers host party for Pope

Beaumont service center employees honored co-worker David Pope with a farewell party in December as he prepared to move to Woodstock, Ga. for a job with another company.

An accountant, Pope said he wanted to move closer to his hometown of Canton, Ga. In Woodstock, he will be working as a fuels contract auditor for Southern Services Company.

Co-workers gave Pope a pewter replica of a Texas boot as a going-away gift.



## Cowen hunts in New Mexico

R. C. Cowen, a 34-year GSUer in Huntsville, bagged an 18-point buck while on a November hunting trip in Los Mossie, New Mexico.

## Employees report long service

Five Beaumont Division line department employees have earned a combined total of almost two centuries of service with Gulf States.

Together, L. C. McCullar, E. R. Vick, Jack Doiron, J. H. "Foots" Sanders and Earl L. Garvin have worked for the company 186 years.



According to *Plain Talks* Correspondent Les Jones, McCullar joined GSU in August, 1940 as a lineman helper and is now inspector of tree trimming and right of way mowing. Vick began work in September, 1940 as a lineman helper and is now supervisor of contractors.

Doiron was employed in June, 1941 as a lineman helper and is now inspector of line contractors. Sanders began work in September, 1945 as a truck driver and is now inspector of tree trimming and right of way mowing. Garvin joined GSU as a lineman helper in October, 1948 and is now inspector of tree trimming and right of way mowing.

## Blood pressure checks given

Demonstrations of blood pressure checks were among the services offered by the Heart Association during the January safety meeting in the Port Arthur Division.



Among those having their blood pressure checked by one of the nurses giving the presentation was Lloyd Craig, T&D building and grounds foreman.



## GSUer's spouse bags deer

Patsy LaFleur, wife of GSUer Mike LaFleur, bagged this nine-point buck during a Jan. 4 hunting expedition at Chester, Texas.

Her husband is a lineman-1st class with Port Arthur T&D.





## Beaumonters host holiday gala

These two Western-garbed celebrants were among more than 100 who attended a New Year's Eve party at the Neches Station clubhouse hosted by five GSUers.

Giving the party were Larry Davis, Joe Russian, Ella Reed, Sandra Rogers and Darlene Randall.



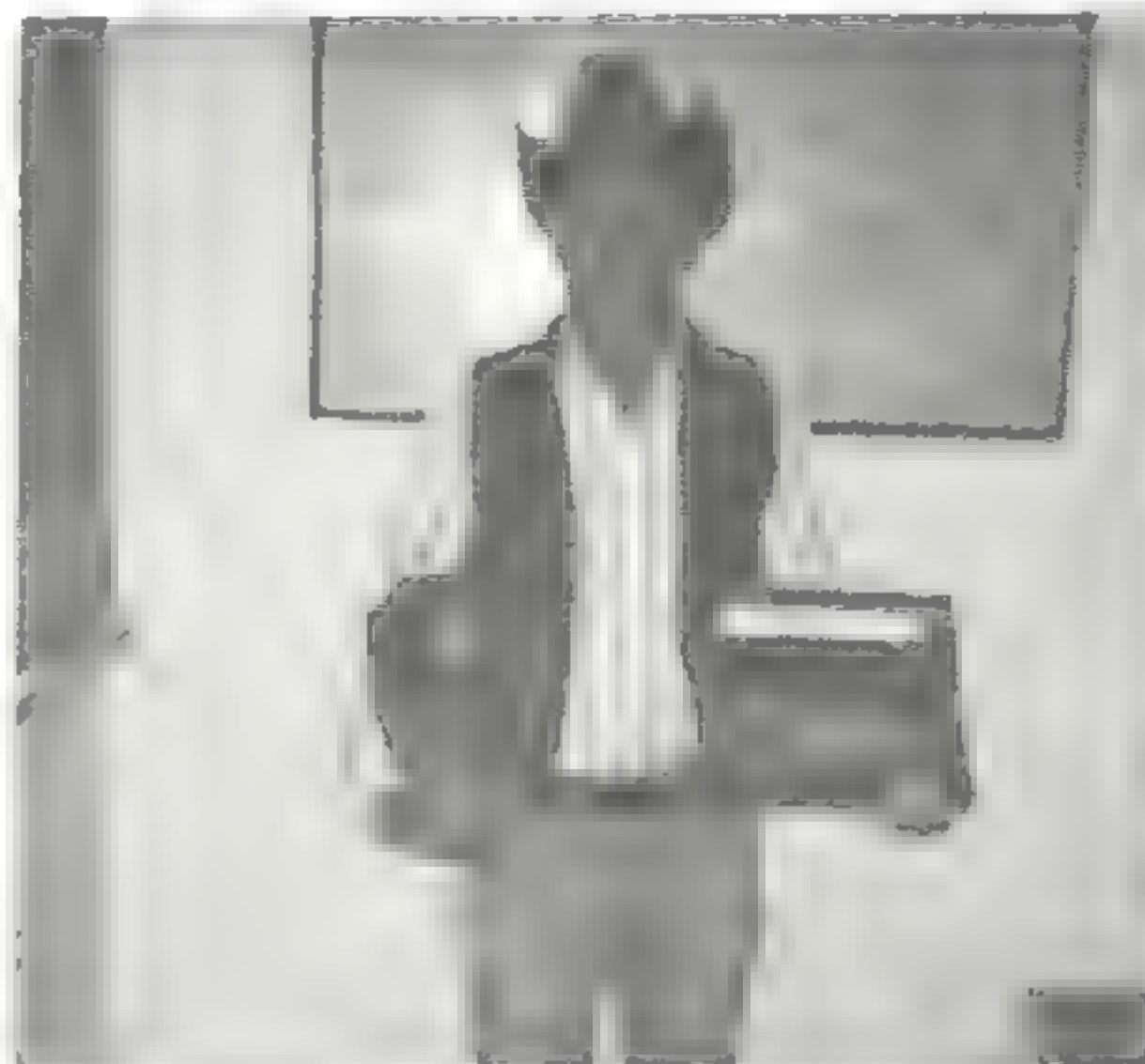
## Co-op engineer returns to A&M

The Port Arthur T&D engineering department held a farewell party for co-op engineer James Striedel as he returned to Texas A&M at the beginning of this semester.

The young man began work with the Port Arthur Division in May, 1979, and worked there three semesters, the last of which ended Jan. 9. His next assignment will be with the long-range planning group in the Beaumont main office.

Before coming to GSU, Striedel earned an AA degree in pre-engineering at Florida Junior College.

Port Arthur co-workers gave him a jogging suit as a going-away gift.



## GSUer coaches 'perfect' team

John E. Henry, Lafayette serviceman-1st class, coaches an elementary-level football team that has earned a perfect 25-0 record over the past four years.

Henry and the members of the Mire Whelps football team, which includes his son, Mark, were honored recently with a supper at the Mire Elementary School cafeteria.



## Jaetzold observes 40th birthday

Calvin Jaetzold of Lake Charles division examines the funeral wreath someone sent him in commemoration of his 40th birthday recently.

The sender remained anonymous, Jaetzold said.

## Glass chairs TAB chapter



Charles Glass, vice president-Texas operations, has been named chairman of the Golden Triangle chapter of the Texas Association of Business (TAB).

Shown with Glass (at right) during a recent committee planning session are (from left) Sam Lord, TAB chapter vice-chairman and manager of the Beaumont works-DuPont, and Carter Cook, TAB regional manager based in Tyler.



## Esthay returns after leave

Bessie Esthay, personnel clerk in Lake Charles, recently returned to work following maternity leave for the birth of her second child, Jared Nicholas. The child was born on the 3rd birthday of his older brother, Aaron.

The new baby is shown in the photograph.



# SERVICE AWARDS

**40**  
years



**Wilson L. P. Cazes**  
Electric T&D  
Baton Rouge

**30**  
years



**Ivy J. Beemel**  
Electric T&D  
Lafayette



**Gladys Marie Smith**  
Electric T&D  
Baton Rouge

**20**  
years



**Harry Butler**  
Electric T&D  
Baton Rouge

**10**  
years



**Donald W. Barnett**  
Electric T&D  
Port Arthur



**Jean H. McClammy**  
Electric T&D  
Beaumont



**Ralph J. Broussard**  
Electric T&D  
Lafayette



**Henry James Jr.**  
Storeroom  
Conroe



**James C. McGrew**  
Division Operations  
Conroe



**Edward T. Brawner**  
Electric T&D  
Lake Charles



**Jerry D. Philen**  
Electric T&D  
Woodville



**Michael Page**  
Plant Production  
Neches Station



**Ernest Branch**  
Division Accounting  
Conroe



**Marvin J. Schaefer**  
Electric T&D  
Conroe



**Gary L. Cockrill**  
Plant Production  
Lewis Creek Station



**D. W. Rutherford**  
Plant Production  
Lewis Creek Station



**Joseph H. Pourciau**  
Electric T&D  
Baton Rouge



**Guy S. Aydell**  
Plant Production  
Louisiana Station



**Jimmy D. Spurlock**  
Electric T&D  
Woodville



**Bessie A. Esthay**  
Human Resources  
Lake Charles



**Susan A. Holeman**  
Electric T&D  
Baton Rouge



# ON THE MOVE

Alexander, Nelson, Jr., Louisiana Station, to mechanic helper, Plant Production

Bangs, Wayne O., Louisiana Station, to turbine engineer, Plant Production.

Barber, George, Baton Rouge, to apprentice, Gas Dept

Barrett, Vickey J., Nelson Station, to mechanic helper, Plant Production

Becker, Ronald T., Conroe, to electrician 2nd class, Plant Production

Belmer, Susan K., Lake Charles, to engineering assistant, Elec. T&D Dept

Benton, James, Jr., Port Arthur, to lineman-4th class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Bobb, Craig A., Port Arthur, to apprentice, Elec T&D Dept.

Booker, Sharon A., Beaumont, to tabulating machine operator, Computer Applications.

Boyt, James P., Baton Rouge, to lineman-4th class, Elec. T&D.

Brooks, Gary W., Port Arthur, to repairman-3rd class, Plant Production

Brown, Frank C., Baton Rouge, to substation mechanic-3rd class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Camp, Stephen M., Conroe, relayman-2nd class, Elec. T&D

Carr, John H., Jr., Baton Rouge, to collector, Division Accounting

Carroll, Aubrey J., Baton Rouge, to lineman-4th class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Champagne, Glenda H., Beaumont, to senior engineering assistant, Engineering Design.

Champagne, Randy D., Port Arthur, to meterman-2nd class, Elec. T&D Dept

Chattin, Gene A., Willow Glen, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production

Childress, Ronald D., Nelson Station, to electrician-2nd class, Plant Production

Clark, Melvin J., Lafayette, to lineman-2nd class Elec. T&D Dept

Corgey, Donald N., Beaumont, to supervisor system testing & maintenance, Engineering Design.

Cormier, Michael W., Baton Rouge, to meterman-1st class, Gas Dept.

Cormier, Paul A., Beaumont, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production.

Creekbaum, Wade J., Louisiana Station, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production

Darcey, Wayne P., Port Arthur, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production.

Day, Floyd D., Louisiana Station, to turbine-water plant operator, Plant Production.

Dearman, Grady E., Jr., Port Arthur, to test technician-2nd class, Plant Production

Doss, David, Beaumont, to meterman-1st class, Elec. T&D

Dowden, Roy J., Nelson Coal Plant, to planning supervisor, System Production.

Duhon, Elizabeth A., Lafayette, to consumer service representative, Division Consumer Services

Eubanks, Fred D., Baton Rouge, to operating supervisor T&D Operations

Faulk, Francis L., Lafayette, to truckdriver, Elec. T&D

Foster, James R., Jr., Baton Rouge, to substation mechanic-3rd class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Fox, Roy T., Beaumont, to test technician-1st class, Plant Production.

Foy, Glen O., Nelson Station, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production

Fulton, Brian K., Port Arthur, to electrician-1st class, Plant Production

Garza, Violet M., Beaumont, to engineering assistant, Engineering Design

Gaus, Henry J., II, Beaumont, to apprentice, Elec. T&D Dept.

Gautreaux, Louis W., Sulphur, to lineman-2nd class, Elec. T&D Dept

George, Ronald G., Baton Rouge, to lineman-3rd class, Elec. T&D Dept

Granger, Stephen F., Orange, to lineman-4th class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Griffin, Charles R., Beaumont, to storekeeper, Elec. T&D Dept.

Guttry, Frederick D., Baton Rouge, to lineman-3rd class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Hanks, Keith A., Port Arthur, to equipment operator, Plant Production

Harris, Phillip D., Beaumont, to supervisor-energy audits, Division Consumer Services.

Harrison, Oscar L., Baton Rouge, to substation mechanic-4th class, Elec. T&D

Hebert, Neal J., Lafayette, to apprentice, Elec. T&D Dept.

Hills, Eddie J., Baton Rouge, to pipeman-1st class Gas Dept

Hines, Charlie L., Cleveland, to lineman-4th class, Elec. T&D Dept

Hiter, Gilbert W., Baton Rouge, to superintendent consumer services, Division Consumer Services.

Hooks, Chester B., Jr., Huntsville, to lineman-4th class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Hooper, Darren T., Lake Charles, to garage mechanic-2nd class, Elec. T&D Dept

Hunt, Peter L., Beaumont, to helper, T&D Helper Crews.

Jimmerson, Doris H., Port Arthur, to test technician-1st class, Plant Production.

Johnson, Cherryll G., Baton Rouge, to general department clerk, Elec. T&D Dept

Johnson, Ellis, Jr., Beaumont, to lineman-3rd class, Elec. T&D Dept

Jones, Louis W., Baton Rouge, to serviceman-2nd class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Joubert, Christopher, Gonzales, to lineman-4th class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Kling, Gary A., Louisiana Station, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production

Koci, Eugene W., Beaumont, to supervisor-customer accounts, Division Accounting

Krebs, Michael G., Dayton, to apprentice, Elec. T&D Dept

Lambert, Jeffrey W., Willow Glen, to test technician-2nd class, Plant Production

Ledet, Nathaniel P., Lake Charles, to garage mechanic helper, Elec. T&D Dept.

Lewis, David E., Lake Charles, to utility foreman, T&D Substation

Lewis, Edwin, New Caney, to utility foreman, T&D Line.

Lupo, Michael J., Willow Glen, to electrician-2nd class, Plant Production.

Mackie, Louis L., Jr., Baton Rouge, to senior meter reader, Division Accounting.

Marchesseault, Jesse L., Jr., Denham Springs, to lineman-3rd class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Martin, Marty R., Willow Glen, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production

Martin, Ronald E., Port Arthur, to helper, T&D/Helper Crews

Mayeux, Ricky J., Louisiana Station, to turbine-water plant operator, Plant Production.

McGallion, Barbara A., Silsbee, to collector, Division Accounting

Miller, Ben E., Lake Charles, to utility foreman, T&D Substation.

Moulton, Dane J., Lake Charles, to communication serviceman-2nd class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Noble, Diane B., Louisiana Station, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production.

Olinger, Wayne J., Baton Rouge, to communication serviceman-2nd class, Elec. T&D Dept

O'Quinn, Harry, Lake Charles, to assistant general substation foreman, T&D Substation.

Oudkirk, John D., Louisiana Station, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production.

Owens, Keith A., Beaumont, to mechanic helper, Plant Production.

Peters, Betty R., Beaumont, to stenographer-senior, Office Services.

Petitjean, John C., Lafayette, to apprentice, Elec. T&D Dept.

Provost, Jacob, Jr., Orange, to substation mechanic-1st class, Elec. T&D Dept

Pulliam, Louis R., Zachary, to lineman-2nd class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Reeves, James H., Nelson Station, to electrician 1st class, Plant Production.

Robicheaux, Joseph A., Lafayette, to lineman-3rd class, Elec. T&D Dept

Rodgers, Earnest W., Nelson Station, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production

Rozas, Julie A., Beaumont, to computer operator, Computer Applications.

Russell, Michael W., Port Arthur, to repairman 2nd class, Plant Production.

Sanchez, Edward J., Baton Rouge, to assistant general substation foreman, T&D Substation

Seals, Kerry M., Port Arthur, to test technician 2nd class, Plant Production

Simpson, Joe A., Beaumont, to senior engineering assistant, Engineering Services.

Sneed, Gloria L., Beaumont, to stenographer-senior, Accounting Services.

Sonnier, Joseph C., Lafayette, to lineman-2nd class, Elec. T&D Dept

Stephens, Harold M., Port Arthur, to industrial engineer, Division Consumer Services.

Sterba, George M., Baton Rouge, to serviceman-1st class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Stott, Bernard, Silsbee, to serviceman-1st class, Elec. T&D Dept.

TeSelle, John A., Port Arthur, to engineer, T&D Engineering

Thibodeaux, Phillip C., Port Allen, to lineman-3rd class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Thompson, George E., Jr., Silsbee, to lineman-3rd class, Elec. T&D Dept

Thompson, Kermit W., Lake Charles, to senior engineering assistant, Elec. T&D Dept.

Tierney, Hal G., Beaumont, to supervisor-administration, Treasury

Townsend, Rodney A., Sabine Station, to control operations foreman, Plant Production.

Trahan, Clinton P., Lake Charles, to lineman-4th class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Trammell, Steven J., Beaumont, to stores truck-driver, Materials Management.

Wagner, Steven T., Willow Glen, to test technician-1st class, Plant Production

Waldrep, Gerald W., Jr., Port Arthur, to repairman-3rd class, Plant Production.

Weatherford, William T., Beaumont, to supervisor-general accounting River Bend Project, Accounting Services

West, Richard J., Baton Rouge, to engineering assistant, Elec. T&D Dept.

Welch, Ronald C., Baton Rouge, to garage mechanic-1st class, Elec. T&D Dept

White, Darrell W., Beaumont, to garage worker, Elec. T&D Dept.

White, Leonard D., Baton Rouge, to substation mechanic-2nd class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Williams, Willie H., Huntsville, to lineman-1st class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Winckler, Steven L., Port Arthur, to lineman-4th class, Elec. T&D Dept.

Wright, Naomi C., Beaumont, to stenographer-senior, Engineering Design.

Zalfen, David J., Louisiana Station, to electrician-2nd class, Plant Production



# Boy Scouts: Trustworthy, Loyal

by Susan Gilley  
Plain Talks Editor

Boy Scouts have a reputation for being trustworthy, loyal, helpful and friendly.

But youths active in the Boy Scouts of America program have even more going for them, claims Gulf Stater Ray Broussard, who is one of five outstanding Scout leaders recognized by the 13-county Three Rivers Boy Scout Council for 1981.

Broussard, who is troop master for Vidor Troop 155 and an electrical engineer in the Beaumont main office, says Scouts learn valuable communications and leadership skills that will last a lifetime.

The recent recipient of the Silver Beaver Award is one of several Gulf States employees who devote much time and energy after work hours to the international organization founded by Lord Robert Baden-Powell in 1908.

Others are Dale Karaff of Neches Station, Rodney Ringuet of Jennings and Doug Watkins of Willow Glen Station.

All four men either have children or have had youngsters of their own involved in Boy Scouts. Watkins and Ringuet are even registered Girl Scouts, and they point out that the girls' organization teaches many of the same skills and values.

Ringuet, who is now 51, probably had one of the most unusual reasons for getting involved with Scouts. The Jennings line department truckdriver recalls joining the Louisiana National Guard at the age of 18. "I was miserable when we went on bivouac," he recollects, explaining, "I never had dry clothes and always seemed disorganized."

But during 22 years with the Guard, Ringuet, who always had enjoyed the outdoors anyway,

learned "you can be just as comfortable in the woods as at home, if you know how."

About 12 years ago, upon his Guard retirement, Ringuet decided to share his skills with young men through the Boy Scouts program.

He is currently Scoutmaster of Troop 68, sponsored by Jennings' Our Lady Immaculate Catholic School and Scout coordinator for Jefferson Davis Parish. His wife Freida once served as his assistant, and he says she would go along on camp-outs "and help with the cooking instructions, administer a little first aid and supply the motherly love for little boys who had never been away from home before." The youths refer to Ringuet himself as "Bud" or "Uncle Bud."

Ringuet and his three children have all been achievers in the Girl and Boy Scout programs.

*Ray Broussard (second from left on front row), Scoutmaster of Vidor Troop 155, paused for a photograph of Scouts from his troop and a Nederland troop during one of the three trips he has made to Philmont Scout Ranch, a 215-square-mile Boy Scout camp in New Mexico. Also shown is his son, Kenneth, shown second from left on the back row.*





# and More

Among Ringuet's awards are the Bishop's Scroll of Honor, the District Award of Honor and the Silver Beaver Award. His son Rod, now 21, attained the rank of Eagle Scout and now serves as an assistant Scoutmaster in his dad's troop. His 19-year-old daughter Mary reached the rank of Cadet in Girl Scouts and 13-year-old David is currently working toward his First Class badge in Boy Scouts.

Watkins was active in both Girl and Boy Scouts for about 15 years, in both Texas and Louisiana.

His daughter Jamie, now 23, works for Gulf States in Baton Rouge. His son, James Douglas "Bo" Watkins Jr., died at the age of 18. He was an Eagle Scout.

The general superintendent of Willow Glen, who has been with Gulf States since 1958, served as a Scoutmaster, assistant Scoutmaster and on the troop committee, a group of adults responsible for reviewing candidates for rankings above the level of First Class Scout and for selecting troop Scoutmasters.

Although Watkins is not currently involved with Scouts, he does not discount the possibility that he might someday again work with the program. "Both Boy and Girl Scouts enhance the knowledge that young people gain," he notes. "By the time a boy reaches Eagle Scout, he seems to be very well equipped and adjusted to life."

Watkins, who says his wife Wanda also took part in Scouting programs, asserts that Scouting is "a character builder."

Karaff, general maintenance supervisor at Neches Station, is troop committee chairman for

Troop 220, also in Vidor. His three sons were also active in the program. "Keith, now 21, never quite made it to Eagle Scout, but Kevin, 19, is an Eagle Scout and Chris, 17, is a Life Scout who expects to reach the Eagle rank in about seven months," he says. His wife Betty Jo is a member of the Scout Mothers Auxiliary.

Karaff is quite articulate about why he approves of Scouting. "I have three fine boys that this has developed. It's a way for me to be associated with them, and I think that's one of a parent's responsibilities," he asserts.

The 21-year GSU veteran maintains that Scouting helps develop character, citizenship and physical abilities. "It gets the boys out in the fresh air and involved with all kinds of activities, from cooking to hiking," he continues.

Both Karaff and Broussard insist that their involvement with Scouting has developed their managerial abilities for their jobs with GSU.

According to Karaff, "I attended a Scout Wood Badge program, a week-long leadership meeting where a bunch of adults get together and act like Boy Scouts. It concentrated on leadership skills, much as the managerial skills development programs offered by the company."

He feels that such training, for leaders and Scouts, "gives a head start on honing leadership skills valuable for dealing with other people."

Broussard's sons and daughter apparently feel as strongly about Scouting as he does.

Three of his four sons — Jerry, 25, Alan, 21, and Charles, 20 — are already Eagle Scouts. Youngest son Kenneth, 17, expects to earn his Eagle Scout rank sometime this year. Daughter Cynthia, 23 and married, is a Girl Scout leader. His wife Luella also frequently participates in Scouting events, having recently earned her Wood Badge for adult leaders.

"The boys (in Scouting) are sharp because of the greater opportunities for learning. It's a way of giving boys a chance to participate in things they like to do and at the same time to develop along the lines of responsibility and achievement."

Broussard concedes that there can be frustrations in Scouting, just as in any other activity, but, he insists, "The achievements far outweigh the problems."



*Editor's Note: Since a two-page article could hardly cover all the Gulf Staters who work with youth organizations, others who enjoy working with Scouts and other groups should contact Plain Talks about future articles in the magazine.*



Dale Karaff



Doug Watkins



Rodney Ringuet



## Studies continue on acid rain

Knowledge of actual damage by acid rain is still minimal, according to on-going studies conducted by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), and much is yet to be learned about this complex ecological phenomenon.

"It appears, however, that the extent of damage caused by acid deposition is still quite limited," comments Rene H. Males, director of EPRI's Energy Analysis and Environment Division. "Moreover," he adds, "it is likely that substantial changes in acid deposition would be necessary to change the effects on ecological systems very much." Unfortunately, adds Males, because of the state of our knowledge, "such statements are necessarily uncertain."

"Acid rain" is a term commonly used to describe precipitation containing pollutants that cause a lowering of pH, which indicates an increase in acidity. Concern has been expressed that pollution, from power plants and other sources, may be increasing the acidity of rain and, in turn, the acidity of some surface and subsurface waters.

Until recently, very little was known about this "acid rain" phenomenon or how it might be damaging natural systems. But recent findings resulting from research funded by EPRI and other organizations indicate that the possible link between air pollution and damage to lakes and forests is not as simple and direct as was originally supposed. The results, according to Males, show a complex mix of causes and effects, both natural and man-made.

While most rain is naturally slightly acidic, Males notes that the oxides of nitrogen and sulfur dissolved in rain increase this acidity, especially in the Eastern U.S. and certain areas of Europe. It is thought that these oxides

come from emissions released by fossil fuels — oil, gas and coal.

But many questions remain unanswered. Because of this, EPRI's research is trying to assess whether the acidity of rain is, in fact, increasing; to what extent actual damage is resulting; and what steps can be taken to reduce any damage that is occurring.



## Acid rain clues given

A new U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) study has found that "local oil burning and automotive sources may be major contributors to the occurrence of acid rain" rather than long-range transport of emissions from coal-fired power plants.

The report, done for DOE by Pedco Environmental Inc., Cincinnati, and submitted to DOE last November, was not available until late in January, 1981. The report focused on three areas of the country — the Adirondack Mountains in New York, California and Florida.

"Oil-fired boilers, especially the smaller commercial, industrial and residential units, produce at least three to 10 times as much primary sulfate" — a supposed precursor to acid rain — per unit of sulfur content as coal-fired units," the report states. "Moreover, oil-fired units emit comparatively large quantities of catalytic compounds capable of rapidly converting still more sulfur oxide to sulfate in the atmosphere."

Based on its findings that local sources "may equal or exceed" sulfates "imported" from other areas, the DOE report said, "The environmental effects of replacing

oil with coal as an energy source should be reconsidered in light of the potentially greater hazards associated with oil burning."

Nitric acid — created mainly from automotive emissions — is responsible for about 30 percent of rainfall acidity in the northeast and Florida, and for about 30-75 percent of the rainfall acidity in California, the report said.

Oil consumption during the '70s increased most sharply in the three areas studied by the DOE consultant.

## NCA predicts production rise

U.S. coal production is expected to rise to 844 million tons in 1981, a 2.3 percent increase over 1980, and coal consumption is forecast to grow 4.8 percent to 837 million tons, the National Coal Association has predicted.

The relatively modest growth in production predicted is based on the fact that consuming industries have high inventories and are not expected to add to them in 1981. It also reflects continued inadequacy of port facilities which will limit coal exports again next year.

Higher oil prices this year spurred greater than expected demand for U.S. coal in 1980, both here and abroad, resulting in a 6.3 percent increase in production compared with 1979.

The NCA Economics Committee's forecast shows electric utilities — which account for more than three-fourths of domestic coal consumption — will increase their demand by 5.3 percent to 595 million tons.

Most of the increased production in the U.S. in 1981 will occur in the Western half of the country, with the coal fueling new power plants.

Eastern production, which rose 25 million tons in 1980, is expected to increase by 2 million tons in 1981, primarily to meet the demand from existing coal-fired power plants and for export.



## An old argument with a new twist

The nation's railroads tell many horror stories about what will happen to their industry if electric utilities begin transporting coal through slurry pipelines. Pipeline opponents scream that there would be serious economic and environmental consequences.

It is all rather reminiscent of what was occurring in 1829 — except that the tables were turned. Supporters of the nation's canal system were contending that an emerging form of transportation known as "railroads" would put people out of work, close businesses and weaken defense.

Gulf Stater Jim Mutch recently sent *Plain Talks* a reprint of a letter that Martin Van Buren, then governor of New York, sent to President Andrew Jackson.

To President Andrew Jackson:

The canal system of this country is being threatened by the spread of a new form of transportation known as "railroads." The federal government must preserve the canals for the following reasons:

One. If canal boats are supplanted by "railroads" serious unemployment will result. Captains, cooks, drivers, hostlers, repairmen and lock tenders will be left without means of livelihood, not to mention the numerous farmers now employed in growing hay for horses.

Two. Boat builders would suffer and tow-line, whip and harness makers would be left destitute.

Three. Canal boats are absolutely essential to the defense of the United States. In the event of the expected trouble with England, the Erie Canal would be the only means by which we could ever move the supplies so vital to waging modern war.

For the above-mentioned reasons the government should create an Interstate Commerce Commission to protect the American people from the evils of "railroads" and to preserve the canals for posterity.

As you may well know, Mr. President, "railroad" carriages are pulled at the enormous speed of 15 miles per hour by "engines" which, in addition to endangering life and limb of passengers, roar and snort their way through the countryside, setting fire to crops, scaring the livestock and frightening women and children. The Almighty certainly never intended that people should travel at such breakneck speed.

Martin Van Buren  
Governor of New York  
January 31, 1829

Obviously, the nation's system of water transportation survived the railroads, just as the railroads will survive slurry pipelines.



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**Q.** Is acid rain a recent phenomenon?

**A.**

Contrary to popular belief, no. Acid has been found in ice samples that date back 350 years. Some of these 350-year-old acid ice samples are from the Himalayas, others from Antarctica. It's very doubtful that they were caused by industrial pollution. And 30-year-old ice samples taken in the same survey show no sudden increase in acid level in recent times.

